



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/069,051	02/21/2002	Walter Rosenbaum	4001-1019	9293

466 7590 04/14/2006

YOUNG & THOMPSON
745 SOUTH 23RD STREET
2ND FLOOR
ARLINGTON, VA 22202

EXAMINER

KRISCIUNAS, LINDA MARY

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
----------	--------------

3623

DATE MAILED: 04/14/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/069,051

Applicant(s)

ROSENBAUM, WALTER

Examiner

Linda Krisciunas

Art Unit

3623

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 21 February 2002.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-9 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-9 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 21 February 2002 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>Feb 21, 2002</u> . | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

1. This is a Non-Final Office Action in response to the application filed February 21, 2002. Claims 1-9 are pending.

Information Disclosure Statement

2. The information disclosure statement filed February 21, 2002 fails to comply with 37 CFR 1.98(a)(2), which requires a legible copy of each cited foreign patent document; each non-patent literature publication or that portion which caused it to be listed; and all other information or that portion which caused it to be listed. It has been placed in the application file, but the information referred to therein has not been considered.

Specification

3. Applicant is reminded of the proper language and format for an abstract of the disclosure.

The abstract should be in narrative form and generally limited to a single paragraph on a separate sheet within the range of 50 to 150 words. It is important that the abstract not exceed 150 words in length since the space provided for the abstract on the computer tape used by the printer is limited. The form and legal phraseology often used in patent claims, such as "means" and "said," should be avoided. The abstract should describe the disclosure sufficiently to assist readers in deciding whether there is a need for consulting the full patent text for details.

Art Unit: 3623

The language should be clear and concise and should not repeat information given in the title. It should avoid using phrases which can be implied, such as, "The disclosure concerns," "The disclosure defined by this invention," "The disclosure describes," etc.

Claim Objections

4. Claim 1 is objected to because of the following informalities: Line 18 contains the phrase "no.", this should be written out as "number" to be minimize any confusion. Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

5. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

Claim 6 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. It is unclear as to what the "set time difference is exceeded" is referring to and what is being compared with each other. The term "jointly" is not given patentable weight as it is unclear as to what not sending jointly means. Are the components that were received still sent or is nothing sent?

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

6. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

Art Unit: 3623

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

7. Claims 1-9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Stolfo et al (US 2004/0002903) in view of Tsukuda (US 6,085,170).

As per claim 1, Stolfo teaches a method for the dispatch of articles where order data and customer details are saved in a database characterized by: transferring or forwarding the order data from the customer to the manufacturers/suppliers of the requested articles (paragraph 30, where the electronic order of a good is communicated through the system and are saved in a database as noted in paragraph 35.); determining the latest of the earliest possible arrival times of the articles at the dispatch center, each arrival time being calculated by adding the respective transport time to the earliest possible outward delivery time (paragraph 175, where the delivery time is logged. The delivery time of the order would be the time when the order is complete, ie the last item is received, at the dispatch. Once the last product is logged, this represents the latest of the earliest arrival times. The arrival time to a customer would inherently be the cumulative time associated with the timing of when the order is complete and the transport time to the customer. It would be impossible to ship anything until the last item is received at the dispatch. For practical purposes a company cannot provide an arrival time or delivery date of a product until they know when they will have all of the components of the order. If there are 3 items and they are delivered to the dispatch center in 3, 4 and 7 days

Art Unit: 3623

respectively. The arrival time to the customer will be based on the longest lead item of 7 days, plus the time it takes to ship the product to the customer. Ground shipment may take 5 days and air shipment 2 days. Therefore the product's arrival time at the customer if shipped via air would be 9 days (7+2).). Stolfo does not explicitly teach a "delivery time to be achieved" or earliest delivery time. Tsukuda teaches that it is known that the dispatch service notifying each manufacturer/supplier for the order concerned of the outward delivery time to be achieved, which is obtained from the latest of the earliest possible arrival times at the dispatch center minus the respective transport time from the manufacturer/supplier to the dispatch center (column 4, lines 53-57, where the scheduled date of arrival at the distribution center is transmitted through the network to the agents or suppliers. It is old and well known that the date provided to a supplier for their required delivery date would consist of the date the distribution center needs it minus the time it will take the supplier to ship it to the distribution center. For practical purposes, if the distribution center is shipping out products on May 15th, they would inform the supplier that they need their component by May 8th (for example), thereby allowing time for the product to transport from the supplier to the distribution center. This provides a buffer of sorts to ensure the products will be at the distribution center in time to ship the complete order and meet customer demand.); the manufacturers/suppliers sending out the ordered articles to the dispatch center at the notified times, and the articles being forwarded jointly to the customer (column 8, lines 35-39, where the delivery of goods information is recorded and (122) delivery goods,

Art Unit: 3623

where each item is delivered to the dispatch or distribution center according to the date); notifying the dispatch center of a common dispatch service of the earliest possible outward delivery time for each of the manufacturers/suppliers and saving this under the respective article number in database at the dispatch service (column 5, lines 49-52, where the earliest delivery date is obtained).

Tsukuda is an analogous art as it also teaches about product delivery systems. Therefore it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify the delivery system of Stolfo with the required delivery time feature of Tsukuda to provide a means for targeting delivery time to the end customer which would in turn improve customer satisfaction.

As per claim 2, Stolfo does not explicitly teach notifying the customer of the delivery. Tsukuda teaches that it is known the dispatch service notifies the customer of at least one proposal for the delivery time for confirmation (column 6, lines 58-67 and column 7, lines 1-3, where the agent notifies the client if the delivery date requested cannot be accommodated, which is equivalent to notifying the client of the delivery date as it performs an identical function in substantially the same manner with substantially the same results.); the customer notifying the dispatch service of the confirmed delivery time (column 8, lines 64-67, where the customer confirms they will be home for the delivery which is equivalent to confirming the delivery time); postponing the outward delivery time to be achieved by the manufacturers/suppliers on the basis of the earliest possible delivery time to the customer, by the time difference between the confirmed and the earliest possible delivery time (column 12, lines 46-58,

Art Unit: 3623

where the purchaser deletes the schedule to receive goods and the schedule is re-adjusted. This is equivalent to postponing the delivery as it performs an identical function in substantially the same manner with substantially the same results.); and determining the earliest possible delivery time to the customer by adding the transport time between dispatch center and customer onto the latest arrival time and then adding onto this a handling time at the dispatch service. Official notice is taken that it is well known that the delivery time of a product to a customer would include the time it takes to get the product to the dispatch center and the time it takes to transport from the dispatch or distribution center to the customer, plus some handling time at the distribution center for receiving and sending out the product. Therefore it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of invention to add up all the transportation and handling timelines in the supply chain, ie obtain the product, handle it and consequently send it to the customer, and determine the earliest delivery time. It would be impossible to ship anything until the last item is received at the dispatch. For practical purposes a company cannot provide an arrival time or delivery date of a product until they know when they will have all of the components of the order. If there are 3 items and they are delivered to the dispatch center in 3, 4 and 7 days respectively. The arrival time to the customer will be based on the longest lead item of 7 days, plus handling time at the dispatch center and the time it takes to ship the product to the customer. It may take the dispatch center a day to receive in product and re-label it for shipment out to the customer. Ground shipment may take 5 days and air shipment 2 days.

Art Unit: 3623

Therefore the product's arrival time at the customer if shipped via air would be 10 days (7+1+2.).

As per claim 3, Stolfo does not explicitly teach notifying transport times from the supplier to the dispatch or distribution center. Tsukuda teaches that it is known the dispatch service is notified of the transport times between the manufacturers/suppliers and the dispatch center (column 4, lines 53-57, where the scheduled date of arrival at the distribution center is transmitted through the network to the agents or suppliers. It is old and well known that the date provided to a supplier for their required delivery date would consist of the date the distribution center needs the product minus the time it will take the supplier to ship it to the distribution center. For practical purposes, if the distribution center is shipping out products on May 15th, they would inform the supplier that they need their component by May 8th (for example), thereby allowing time for the product to transport from the supplier to the distribution center. This provides a buffer of sorts to ensure the products will be at the distribution center in time to ship the complete order and meet customer demand), together with the earliest possible outward delivery times and the information saved in the database (paragraph 175, where the delivery time is logged. The delivery time of the order would be the time when the order is complete, ie the last item is received, at the dispatch. Once the last product is logged, this represents the latest of the earliest arrival times. The arrival time to a customer would inherently be the cumulative time associated with the timing of when the order is complete and the transport time to the customer. It would be impossible to ship anything until

Art Unit: 3623

the last item is received at the dispatch. For practical purposes a company cannot provide an arrival time or delivery date of a product until they know when they will have all of the components of the order. If there are 3 items and they are delivered to the dispatch center in 3, 4 and 7 days respectively. The arrival time to the customer will be based on the longest lead item of 7 days, plus the time it takes to ship the product to the customer. Ground shipment may take 5 days and air shipment 2 days. Therefore the product's arrival time at the customer if shipped via air would be 9 days (7+2).). Tsukuda is an analogous art as it also teaches about product delivery systems. Therefore it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify the delivery system of Stolfo with the transport time notification feature of Tsukuda to provide a more efficient means for scheduling deliveries which would provide improved operations and improved customer service.

As per claim 4, Stolfo teaches in order to determine the current transport times between manufacturers/suppliers and the dispatch center, these times are calculated, saved and statistically analyzed on a continuous basis (paragraph 75, where the shipment has a tracking number and can be tracked through a tracking system. It is old and well known in the art that package tracking systems calculate the delivery time value and can determine the average delivery time which would constitute a statistical analysis. Therefore it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to determine the average delivery time since there are multiple variables that

Art Unit: 3623

contribute to the delivery time and tracking the times would provide quality data for determining the predictability of the delivery system.).

As per claim 5, Stolfo does not explicitly teach a supplier coordinating the dispatch. Tsukuda teaches that it is known that a single on-line supplier which coordinates the dispatch, leads to several sub-online suppliers (column 2, lines 37-41, where a distributor is used to provide a smooth delivery system, wherein a distributor connects products multiple suppliers to recipients. Tsukuda also notes that suppliers can be on the internet (column 1, lines 11-13)). Tsukuda is an analogous art as it also teaches about product delivery systems. Therefore it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify the delivery system of Stolfo with the required delivery time feature of Tsukuda to provide a means for efficiently scheduling delivery that will lead to improved customer satisfaction since they can rely on a required delivery time.

As per claim 6, Stolfo does not explicitly teach "exceeding a set delivery time". Tsukuda teaches that it is known the earliest outward delivery times of the articles from the manufacturers/suppliers are compared with each other, and where a set time difference is exceeded the articles are not sent jointly to the customer (column 4, lines 53-57, where the scheduled date of arrival at the distribution center is transmitted through the network to the agents or suppliers. It is old and well known that the date provided to a supplier for their required delivery date would consist of the date the distribution center needs it minus the time it will take the supplier to ship it to the distribution center. It is old and well

Art Unit: 3623

known in the art that if the required delivery time is not met the order is not sent, whether it be jointly or not. For practical purposes, customers may order perishable or timely products such as tickets to an event and if they are not received by the required time the item is not shipped since it no longer has value for the customer. Therefore it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to incorporate a timeframe that when exceeded would stop the shipment of the product to provide a means for maintaining the value of the products and for meeting customer service expectations.). Tsukuda is an analogous art as it also teaches about product delivery systems. Therefore it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify the delivery system of Stolfo with the distributor feature of Tsukuda to provide a means for a more efficient and cost-effective delivery system since the system is utilizing a distributor instead of each company shipping items individually. This simplifies logistics since everything is sent to the distributor and also saves resources, including money since the companies are only shipping to a distributor and not everywhere where their customers live.

As per claim 7, Stolfo does not explicitly teach size of product to be delivered. Tsukuda teaches that it is known the size of the articles and their characteristics are also saved in the database, if required this information is checked in order to ascertain whether these articles can be sent in one parcel, and they are dispatched in one parcel if a positive result is obtained from the check (column 6, lines 35-40 and column 9, lines 52-56, where the size of the

Art Unit: 3623

goods is determined and subsequent shipping arrangements are made if they are deemed too large to fit in the space allotted.). Tsukuda is an analogous art as it also teaches about product delivery systems. Therefore it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify the delivery system of Stolfo with the required size determination feature of Tsukuda to provide a means for scheduling the delivery of large goods.

As per claim 8, Stolfo does not explicitly teach several possible manufacturers/suppliers for a specific article a selection is made on the basis of the shortest possible transport distances to the customer and/or the earliest possible outward delivery times. Official notice is taken that it is old and well known in the art that companies ship products from the closest distribution centers. Therefore it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to ship from the shortest distance or fastest delivery location in order to reduce cost and expedite shipping, which also improves customer satisfaction.

As per claim 9, Stolfo teaches the customer selects the dispatch service (paragraph 84, where a preference for shipping mode can be made.).

Conclusion

8. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. The following art also teaches about delivery of products: Rogers (US 2001/0042024), Barnes et al (US 5,970,475), Musgrove et al (6,725,222), King Jr et al (US 5,319,542), Wojcik et al (US 5,758,329), Kelly (US

Art Unit: 3623

2002/0046173), Garretson (US 2001/0047306), Cupps et al (US 5,991,739), Hanzek (US 6,980,963), Wojcik et al (US 5,666,493), Short et al (US 2002/0188702), Kipp (US 5,890,136), Ross Jr et al (US 6,993,572), Hillbush et al (US 2005/0038758), Tsukuda (US 2001/0013007) and "American Is Upgrading Transportation System", Supermarket News, v45, n40, October 2, 1995.


Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Linda Krisciunas whose telephone number is 571-272-6931. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday through Friday, 6:30 am to 3:00 pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Tariq Hafiz can be reached on 571-272-6729. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

LMK

LMK
April 7, 2006



TARIQ R. HAFIZ
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
TECHNOLOGY CENTER